are moved, I request I may be given permission to move my amendment now, for, if my amendment is accepted, then the other amendments need not be moved.

Deputy President.—You may move.

Mr. C. J. Mathew.—I beg leave of the House to move that the Bill as amended by the Select Committee be recommitted to the original Committee.

Mr. K. Ayyappan.—I beg to second it.

Mr. C. A. Kunjunni Raja.—Is the re-committal to consider the amendments now brought forward?.

Mr. C. J. Mathew.—Yes, all

Deputy President.—But you do not move the latter part of the amendment 'with two or more Members co-opted'?

Mr. C. J. Mathew.—It is found from the Rules that I cannot move both together, as the latter portion can be moved only by an independent motion.

Deputy President.—Is the recommittal without any limitation?

Mr. C. J. Mathew.—Yes.

Shall I move the amendment as it stands, *i. e.*, including 'with two or more Members co-opted'?

Mr. K. P. Kannan Nayar.—Standing Order 33 (2) lays down that the latter part of the amendment could be moved only as a separate motion.

Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon.—The motion is made under Standing Order 37 (2). It has only reference to the re-committal.

Mr. C. J. Mathew—I have made this motion under Standing Order 37 (2). My request is that two more Members may be co-opted. The amendment, as it is, contains it.

Deputy President.—That is not countenanced by the Standing Orders.

Mr. C. J. Mathew.—What is there in the provision to show that Members should not be co-opted?

As it was 3-30 p. m., the adjournment motion of Dr. A. G. Menon was taken up.

Adjournment motion re: the mismanagement of the Maharaja's College Hindu Hostel.

Deputy President.—You may speak.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—Sir, I beg leave to move for an adjournment of the business of the House "to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance, to wit, the mismanagement of the Maharaja's College Hindu Hostel, Ernakulam, by the authorities concerned, as evidenced by the sad demise of a boarder, the late Sankaran Nayar, on the 15th of March 1930".

Sir, I rise with a heavy heart to move this adjournment motion. The circumstances that led to or rather hastened the end of a boarder student, Taravath Sankaran Nayar, of the

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Maharaja's College Hindu Hostel, clearly show that matters are not as they ought to be in the Educational Department of the State. The facts are these:—

About 20 boarders were suffering from fever, from the second week of Kumbham 1105. There were small-pox cases in the Town, and one or two of the boarders also caught the contagion.

"On the 10th of March this student had slight headache. The next day, *i. e.*, on the 11th, he had fever. Some medicine was given him on the 12th, and by the 13th evening he was free from fever. But he had profuse perspiration thereafter and constant restlessness and difficulty of breathing. On the 13th night this student as well as other sick boarders could not get hot water (ചൂടു വെള്ളം), consequently they had to drink ordinary tap-water." These are the very words of the boy himself when I saw him at his own house at Palghat at about 1 p. m. on 15th March 1930. When I saw him, he was extremely weak and in a very critical condition.

The authorities closed the hostel to all boarders from the 15th morning, making no provision whatsoever *even to the sick boarders*. Therefore, this boy also had to go home to Palghat. On the 15th morning by 4-30 a. m. train, he had to start home. Fortunately, a day student of the College, Mr. Manavikrama Panikkar of the Junior B. A. class, knew of the illness, and accompanied him in his journey. The boy reached home at about 11-30 a. m. on the 15th in a dying condition and breathed his last the same night at about 11 o'clock. These are the facts.

Now I ask on what principles are the hostels run in the State? What was the hurry to close the hostel in this particular case, even without providing proper arrangements for the sick boarders? If there were a few cases of small-pox, how is the hostel affected? Why should it be closed so suddenly? I think the persons who were running the hostels were very unwise in closing it in such a hurry. It shows a callous indifference to the fate of the students who had come from far.

Granting that the authorities had the right to close the hostel whenever they wanted, can they ask the sick boarders to quit the hostel so suddenly? It is a great surprise to me that the persons concerned could be so inhuman as to ask fever-stricken boys to quit the hostel and shift for themselves suddenly. What was the objection for the authorities to continue the hostel at least for those patients till they recovered and could travel with safety to their homes, or till they got some assistance from their homes? Is this not commerce with a vengeance, Sir?

Secondly, we find that the boys who were suffering from fever, and hence naturally thirsty, had to drink ordinary tap-water. More than one student will testify to this fact that some patients,

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including Sankaran Nayar, were given tap-water by their fellow boarders, as there was no hot water (ചൂട വെള്ളം) available in the hostel on the 13th night. Further, there was nobody to attend to them during the nights. That patients could not get hot water (ചൂട വെള്ളം) for drinking, and there was nobody to attend on them during those nights, to use the Warden's words, 'those disquieting days, when so many of our students got attacks of fever" and when "they were all in a flutter", show that the management of the hostel is very rotten indeed.

Thirdly, this boy was practically sent away to die on the 15th morning, for then his condition was critical. I am informed that no responsible medical man examined him on the 14th and certified that he was fit for travelling, though the Chief Medical and Sanitary Officer visited the hostel that very evening.

In this connection, I may state that I may not be correct in saying that the Chief Medical and Sanitary Officer visited the place and did not examine the boy. Because I had sent in a number of questions, and I have not got them answered. So I submit that I am subject to correction.

The boy's condition is described in a letter to me, dated 24th March 1930.

Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon.—The date of the letter, please?

Dr. A. G. Menon.—The date of the letter is 24th March 1930. The letter itself is here with me; if you want, you can have it.

And in an article published in the Calicut 'Manorama' Paper by Mr. E. Sankaran Unni, Member of the Madras Legislative Council, who accidentally met the boy at Shoranur platform. He says: "I have just heard that Tharavath Sankara Menon" —probably he does not know that he is Nayar and not Menon— "has passed away. I happened to know something about the matter. I am told that you are taking steps to draw the attention of your Government to this unfortunate case. Hence this letter."

"On the 15th instant I was travelling by the early morning train from Calicut which reaches Shoranur at 9-30 a. m. When my train reached Shoranur I saw a boy in the *last stages of exhaustion* (Sir, the italics are mine) being carried in an easy chair to the second class compartment next to the one in which I was travelling. There were two other boys with him. On enquiry I was told who the boy was."

"It must interest you to know the condition in which I found Sankara Menon. *He was perspiring profusely, all his clothes were wet. He was breathing hard and fast. To the touch he was ice-cold.* He could hardly talk. There was *great restlessness* and he was occasionally fainting. He could hardly take in the coffee he had in a flask. *I feared he may not get home alive.*"

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"Sankara Menon's companion, a fellow student, asked me, if I would mind travelling with Sankara Menon. I readily agreed and went into the compartment. I suggested that the companion should travel with the patient as I was going only as far as Ottappalam. Then he told me he had no money to buy a second class ticket. I bought him a second class ticket and both of us travelled in Sankara Menon's compartment."

"Sankara Menon's companion told me that there had been an epidemic of fever in the Ernakulam College Hostel, and that the boys were asked to vacate and go home. It was the Warden who gave the order. After giving instructions to close the hostel, he went away to Madras. The Deputy Warden it was that actually sent away the boys."

"I asked the boy why he was not sent to the hospital. The answer was that it was not done. He had fever for only two days, and there was some sort of medical attendance during these days. *But no notice was taken of the after effect of the fever.*"

"I asked the boy why the Deputy Warden did not furnish them with the necessary funds. The answer was he did not. I was shocked to see the boy's condition. *Even to a layman it was clear that he was not in a fit condition for travel.* He had no money to purchase the few things he wanted. There was no escort to mind him except the very fine young man who was accompanying him. *I have very little doubt that the boy's death was hastened by fatigue, want of nourishment and proper attendance. It requires no doctor to tell me that.*"

"The man who allowed the poor boy to take such a long journey is surely responsible for his death. The callousness of it all simply horrifies me. I hope you will be able to get the Government to deal with him as he deserves."

"I had intended to write to the Cochin Government about this. Now that you have taken up the matter, I place this letter in your hands to be used as you think best."

In this connection I bring to the notice of this House that I was the first medical man to see the boy after he reached home. I saw him between 12-30 and 1 p. m., then his condition was hopeless and it was only a question of hours for him to depart.

The hostel authorities themselves admit that "detailed instructions were given" how the boy should be taken home. I shall quote the very words of the Warden. "They, (boys who accompanied Sankaran Nair) were advised also to convey Sankaran Nair to the other side of the Shoranur bridge in an *easy chair*." If a boy cannot walk from the Cochin platform to the other side even with the help of somebody else and had to be taken in an 'easy chair', what must be his condition, Sir? I say he was not in a condition even to sit up in a chair. Am I wrong when I say that that travelling in that state of health in this hot weather was directly responsible for his end in the same day? That sin is surely on the head of the authorities concerned, whether it be the Educational or Medical. I must say such outrageously callous conduct on the part of authorities is sure to bring discredit on the administration of the State.

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Lastly, one more point has to be brought to the notice of the House in this connection for its seriousness. This student was sent away from the hostel to die, as it were, without giving him money for his travelling expenses. Can anybody imagine this supreme act of charity of the authorities concerned? He was not provided with any money at all, though he was advised to travel in the second class by the good-natured Superintendent of the hostel. The boy's friend, Mr. Panikkar, had to go to Trippunithura and borrow a few rupees which was not sufficient for the expenses. As I have said elsewhere, it was Mr. Sankaran Unni who assisted him with a second class ticket, from Shoranur to Palghat. I dare say that such conduct is bound to bring discredit not only on the persons immediately concerned but on the whole administration which makes it possible for such conditions to exist.

Sir, in conclusion, I am to remind my colleagues that we are not dealing with an ordinary incident of importance. This is an affair affecting the lives of students who are sent to our Institution by their parents from far away on the implicit faith that the Boarding authorities will properly look after them.

Our State, I need not say, stands foremost and, nay, ranks first in the matter of education. Its fair name in that field attracts many students from outside.

In an Educational Boarding Institution the authorities are not so many paid instructors but are really the *loco parentis* of the wards.

Is not this incident, which has got wide publicity in the West Coast, enough to tarnish the fair name which our State has earned in matters educational? In such matters Caesar's wife should be above suspicion. But here, alas, it is not mere suspicion, but I am sure there is substantial truth in the accusation before us. It is for us to vindicate our position by bringing the matter to the notice of the Government and seeing that the persons responsible for such reprehensible conduct are properly dealt with, to avoid any future recurrence.

I request the President to exercise his right of giving the Members only the time fixed and not to allow desultory talk, so that it may come to an end. I request the Members on this side of the House to hear the Government side also before they make their remarks. By merely relying upon my words, if they are to criticise the action of the Government, that will not be fair. I have placed all the facts that I could collect as faithfully as I got them. I request the Government to reply first and request my colleagues to follow.

Mr. Thomas Manjuran.—It is a very good idea.

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—Sir, knowing, as I do, the

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relationship in which the mover of this adjournment motion stands to the bereaved family, I can very well understand and appreciate the depth of feeling which must have actuated him to bring to the notice of the House this sad and painful occurrence (*hear, hear*) in the very emphatic manner he has done it. In fact, I myself, when I received a communication on this subject from the venerable lady who was the guardian of the deceased young man,—

Dr. A. G. Menon.—Grand-mother.

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—Yes, and guardian of the deceased young man, I remember the very disquieting impression that that letter produced in my own mind, though I am a comparative stranger to that family. As I said, I can very well understand how persons more intimately connected with the family should be affected by this unhappy occurrence. But in this House, we, who have got to sift and find out the truth, try to divest ourselves of emotions and view these things in a calm, deliberate and dispassionate manner. I have been making enquiries ever since I heard about this sad event. I cannot say I have completed my enquiries yet for this reason that, by the time I heard about this occurrence, in fact before this unhappy incident occurred at Palghat, the College had been closed, the hostel had been closed, and the hostel boarders had left the station. Yet, every possible enquiry I have been making, and I shall place the results of my enquiry before this House.

Well, as regards the charges that the mover of this motion has brought against the hostel authorities. He started with the matter of കുടിവെള്ളം. I have visited the hostel myself. I questioned all the officers who are responsible for the management of the hostel, and I found that കുടിവെള്ളം had been provided in the hostel throughout these days. I saw myself the big vessel in which കുടിവെള്ളം was kept in the hostel on the ground floor, and the Superintendent of the hostel told me that, in his daily rounds, he used to enquire, and he even remembers that there was a vessel in which it was kept in the boy's room.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—On the 13th, Sir?

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—During the days of his illness, 13th and 14th.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—Specify the date.

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—He used to make several rounds. Even granting that, at a particular time of night, there was no കുടിവെള്ളം in his room, there were several servants sleeping in the hostel.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—Below or upstairs?

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—In the hostel. There were boys, his friends, attending on this sick young man. There were

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neighbouring rooms. There was one cook set apart entirely to attend on the sick boys.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—Not to interrupt you. I want to get information whether anybody was sleeping upstairs.

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—There were several servants sleeping in the hostel.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—In the upstairs of the hostel ?

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—What I want to say is that one of the students had only to go downstairs to rouse the servants. I cannot say whether, on that particular night, there was a servant sleeping upstairs. I say there were servants sleeping in the hostel. I cannot say whether they were in any particular room.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—Particular room I never wanted.

Rao Saihb Mr. C. Matthai.—But you have to consider there were the boys. They had only to go down and fetch ൟ കോവ്വ. which was kept downstairs.

Mr. Thomas Manjuran.—Was there a room-mate ?

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—Yes. A Poduval.

Mr. Thomas Manjuran.—Have you seen him ? Have you got statements from him ?

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—He had left Ernakulam before my enquiry. But it is an ascertained fact that he was the sick boy's room-mate. He was one of the boys who accompanied him.

Mr. Thomas Manjuran.—I am asking whether you got any statement from him ? Have you got any statement from Poduval ?

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—I have the information that he was a room-mate, that he was living in the same room.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—Whether you, Sir, in your elaborate enquiry, came across Poduval, and had a talk with him ?

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—I came to know of the occurrence only after he had left the station.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—Since then ?

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—Poduval had left.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—You have not seen Poduval.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—I saw Poduval, and I have got some of this information from him.

Mr. Thomas Manjuran.—Have you taken a statement ?

Dr. A. G. Menon.—I have only taken the points and not a statement. I want to satisfy myself.

Mr. Thomas Manjuran.—We must be scrupulously fair to all parties. Was that Poduval ill ?

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—He was not ill. He was in the same room with the sick boy. Now, about the statement

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that the hostel was closed. The hostel was formally closed. The College itself was closed on account of the prevalence of small-pox. There were a good many students who had to stay behind for University examinations. The servants were not disbanded. The establishment was not disbanded. The hostel was kept running for the sake of those who had to remain. I myself looked into the hostel notice. In the notice it was stated that there were arrangements for those who had to remain for the examinations. So, when I say the hostel was closed, it was only formally closed, and those who desired to go were allowed to go home.

Mr. Thomas Manjuran.—Was there anybody in the hostel on Saturday ?

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—Yes.

Mr. Thomas Manjuran.—On Sunday ?

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—Till Saturday there were three of them.

Mr. Thomas Manjuran.—I want definite facts. Why did they remain there ?

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—The hostel was also to be continued for the benefit of the seniors appearing for the University examinations. The College Council had met in the meanwhile and had ordered that all students who wished to remain in the hostel should get themselves re vaccinated. The Chief Medical Officer came and visited the hostel in the evening of Friday, and he too advised that all should get vaccinated. The students themselves were in a panic, and many of them were afraid of having a vaccination just then, when they had barely a week before them for the examinations, lest it should cause fever and prevent them from sitting for the examination. Eventually they all expressed a desire to go home for a change and come back for their examinations.

Among the students who remained were T. Sankaran Nayar, K. V. P. Balakrishnan Nayar and K. Krishnan Nambidy. These had recovered from their fever but were still feeling weak. T. Sankaran Nayar wanted to go home even on Friday itself but was advised to postpone his journey. He went by the Saturday (2nd Meenam 1105) morning train, and he was entrusted to the kind care of his room-mate and another fellow student, an old friend of his. They were advised to be very careful, and all facilities were provided. Oranges were brought and given to him, and a thermo-flask too was supplied for taking *kanjee* or milk which might prove useful on the way. K. V. P. Balakrishnan Nair was entrusted to his room-mate Manju Nath Rao, who cheerfully agreed to take him home. Krishnan Nambidy stayed on till Sunday

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Mr. Thomas Manjuran.—Have you verified that fact, Sir?

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—That is a fact. He too went home with some of his friends. It may be stated in this connection that the hostel provided all conceivable facilities for the patients. The diet was regulated to suit their needs. *Kanjee*, barley water, milk, sago, etc., were available in the kitchen at all times, and one cook was specially deputed to attend to the needs of the patients. Medical aid, and that of the very best kind, was available at all times. All the medicines too were purchased from the office and supplied to the students. In the case of those who were in a state of convalescence, oranges and other things were purchased and given. As the College had to be closed suddenly, many students had not money enough for going home, and money too was advanced to several students.

Mr. Thomas Manjuran.—What about this student?

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—I asked the Superintendent. He said no mention at all was made about any lack of money. In the case of several who wanted money, the Superintendent himself advanced the money.

Mr. Thomas Manjuran.—Is it a fact?

Dr. A. R. Menon.—It seems the Warden was absent.

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—The Warden was absent when the hostel was closed, but the Superintendent was there all the time.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—Did the Superintendent ask this boy whether he required any money?

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—He belonged to a well-to-do family. He was a young man travelling with two companions. If they stood really in need of money, they would have asked the authorities. There is also the fact that money was advanced to other students, so that, there was absolutely no room for presuming that the party lacked money.

Mr. V. D. Ouseph.—Had he any local guardian?

Mr. A. B. Salem.—There were some friends who were asked to look after him.

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon's family, for instance.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—Did the students know that they were being helped by the College authorities in the matter of money?

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—Several of them came and asked for money. That itself shows there was ample provision for advancing money. There were several people who benefited

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by the advances given. The charge is that the hostel was closed, and the boys were asked to quit.

Mr. Thomas Manjuran.—That is the most important fact.

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—The hostel was not really closed, and no single boy was compelled to leave or told that he had to quit the hostel. Some boys remained after this boy had left the hostel. As a matter of fact, even on Friday, he was insisting on going home. He contracted fever on Wednesday. It was slight fever. The Doctor was called in, and a mild purgative was given, and then a dose for fever was given, and then on Thursday evening the fever subsided entirely. On Thursday itself the boy was in a hurry to go home, and then his friends and the Superintendent advised him to stay on till Saturday owing to his weakness. On Saturday morning only he was allowed to go. He had actually no fever on Friday. The Doctor came on Friday and went round. He noticed nothing in particular about this boy, and it should also be remembered that there were 20 cases of fever, 2 of which developed into small-pox. There was a regular panic. As a matter of fact, many of the boys who had fever wanted to go, and the authorities of the College did not want to stand in their way. But, in the case of this particular boy, on account of his weak condition and the fact that he had fever on Thursday morning, he was asked to stay. It was only on Saturday morning that he left.

Mr. K. P. Kannan Nayar.—Was he examined on Friday?

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—The Doctor went round and saw this boy. There were many who were ill and who had fever. The Doctor noticed nothing particular about this boy.

Mr. K. P. Kannan Nayar.—Was he examined?

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—The fact of the matter is that they thought that it was an ordinary case of fever and there was nothing serious about it.

Mr. Thomas Manjuran.—Was not an examination conducted on Friday?

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—This boy was, as a matter of fact, examined on Friday morning.

Mr. Thomas Manjuran.—Must have been examined.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—I want a definite statement whether the Director of Public Instruction is in a position to assure me that the boy was examined on Friday.

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—I am perfectly satisfied that he was examined on Friday.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—The boy himself told me that he had perspiration and difficulty of breathing.

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Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—That might have been due to the very hot weather, and the after effect of the fever. It was immediately after the fever had left him. So neither the authorities of the hostel nor the Doctor suspected that this was a serious case. I met some of the boarders who belong to Trichur and who travelled in the same train. As I said, at Ernakulam I was not able to examine any hostel boarder. At Trichur I sent for those boys who were hostel boarders here. They said they travelled in the same train on Saturday morning, and they saw the boy get into the second class compartment.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—Without any assistance?

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—That is what they said.

Dr. A.G. Menon.—When the Director questioned them, the boys might have been afraid.

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—I simply conversed with the boys, so that I might form an impression. They said the boy got into his compartment, and he was sitting on the seat. When they got down at Trichur, they went to his compartment. They saw him sitting in the second class compartment, and they conversed with him for a little time, and then came away. What I want to make clear is that there was nothing for the hostel authorities to suspect that it was a very serious case. One can understand sudden developments taking place. I mean there may be symptoms which escape the notice of even the very best of Doctors. I have been asking the Chief Medical and Sanitary Officer himself. I asked him what his views were in the matter. He said it might have been a case of suppressed small-pox.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—May I know, Sir, if it is an official version? Who told the Director that it is a case of suppressed small-pox?

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—He said it might be that or it might be a case of failure of heart—these two alternatives.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—Who?

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—The Chief Medical and Sanitary Officer.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—He never saw the boy.

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—He understood the circumstances, and his assistant was attending on the boy. He said it might have been a case of suppressed small-pox. They did not see any visible sign.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—I heard the Chief Medical and Sanitary Officer say that the boy was examined on Friday. May I know by whom?

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—By Dr. Ittoop.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—Did he say to the Chief Medical and

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Sanitary Officer that it was a case of suppressed small-pox?

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—It was a possible explanation offered after the death of the boy.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—Post mortem diagnosis?

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—What was the effect of your diagnosis?

Dr. A. G. Menon.—The result of my diagnosis was that I found that the boy was dying of exhaustion caused by a travel from Ernakulam to Palghat in the hot sun, and that caused his death so suddenly.

Mr. Thomas Manjuran.—What was the disease?

Dr. A. G. Menon.—I did not see his disease. He was perspiring. He was in a sinking condition. There were no symptoms of small-pox on his body. If it is a suppressed one, I cannot see it. I saw him only two hours before. By that time he died.

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—11 to 1.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—In two hours I cannot make a diagnosis. He was a sinking man, and I never wanted to trouble him. I could not spare him with any kind of stimulant.

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—What I would like to place before this House is that there are possibilities of suddeen development which even the best of Doctors in the world may not be able to detect.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—I don't deny that fact, Sir.

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—It was only the other day that the barrister who was arguing the Meerut case suddenly collapsed. What I say is, I don't want to exonerate the hostel authorities from ignorance. They might have been ignorant. What I must point out most emphatically to this House is the uncharitable way in which they are charged with neglect. I feel it myself. Not only myself, but any one who knows anything about the Hindu Hostel and anything about Mr. Ramanatha Ayyar will feel it. He does not do these things as mere official duty. He is like a parent to every boy. That is what pains me bitterly. I have been calling him several times, and I cannot help feeling for him when all these insinuations and deliberate charges are brought against him.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—Certainly it is not an insinuation. I am his personal friend.

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—The hardest and unkindest of cuts can then come from personal friends. That is all what I can say. I have myself heard the Doctor testifying to the vigilant attention paid by Mr. Ramanatha Ayyar to the sick boarders. And now we are told stories about [illegible] and an easy chair. The Superintendent instructed that the boy should

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be taken in an easy chair, so that, if he erred, he might err on the safe side. He insisted that the patient should not be conveyed in a sitting chair, but, he has to be taken in an easy chair. Is that a grievous offence? They were supplied with oranges, a thermo-flask and other things that might be required on the way. Mr. Ramanatha Ayyar thought of the Shoranur bridge and gave special instructions that the patient should be taken in an easy chair. And now it is urged as a grievous offence.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—It shows that he is weak, that even to sit he was weak. That is all.

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—But the way these things are interpreted and brought forward as arguments is most painful. It is a thing that has moved me greatly. I know the conditions of the hostel. I know the individuals whom the Department has placed in charge of the institution, and I may also repeat what I said at the outset that I have not completed my enquiries. I have gathered sufficient information to make the statements that I have made, and I can give this House the assurance that, if, on fuller enquiries, I find that there has been dereliction of duty on the part of any, I shall be the first to bring the offenders to book. That assurance also I can give.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—The Director is also excited when he deals with his own Department. Is it a wonder that I get excited when the case of a boy under my care is dealt with?

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—I began my speech in calmness.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—You ended in excitement.

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—I can understand your feelings so that I want you to understand my feelings.

Mr. C. J. Mathew.—Has the Government made any arrangement whatsoever for the medical examination of the students periodically?

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—No special Doctors have been appointed. The hostel is next door to the hospital. We do not even have a sick room in the hostel. Whenever there is a serious case, the patient is just removed to the hospital, and the Government Doctors of the hospital are at the disposal of the hostel. There are Doctors on duty in the hospital throughout the day. During those days I have ascertained that the Doctor went round not once, not twice, but sometimes thrice or four times a day. Even if a special Doctor is put in charge of the hostel, he cannot be there the whole time, day and night. As it is, they have only to send a servant across the road, and a

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Doctor would come to the hostel. exFrom the perience of all these years, Government Doctors have been paying every possible attention to the sick boarders of the hostel. As regards giving information to guardians. As I said, there were about 20 cases of fever in the hostel. Of these 20 cases 2 developed into small-pox, and the guardians were informed at once. There were two other serious cases. There also the guardians were informed at once. The fact that no information was given in this particular case was simply due to the fact that I have been emphasising, that they did not realise at all that it was a serious case. Several other cases were considered much more serious.

Mr. K. P. Kannan Nayar.—May I know when he was examined?

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—On Friday morning. His case was not particularly brought to the notice of the Doctor. The Doctor went round and saw all the patients. No particular advice was given by the Doctor in the case of this boy.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—The point was, I believe, he was examined on Friday, and the Doctor certified that the boy was fit to travel.

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.— As his case was not regarded as serious, the Doctor's special attention was not called to this particular boy, and the Doctor had no special instructions to give.

Dr. A. R. Menon.— Do you collect any fee from the students for medical attendance?

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—There is no special fees.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—Is the medical man, who is attending the hostel, paid any fee?

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—No special fee. They are paid for the work they do. They are paid by the students.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—How much is it per head?

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.— It depends upon the amount of the work that the Doctors have to do.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—Does the student select any Doctor he likes, or is there restriction that only Government Doctors should come, simply because the hospital happens to be next door?

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—There is no such restriction, but there is the proximity of the Government hospital.

Mr. C. J. Mathew.—Is it a fact that the Chief Medical and Sanitary Officer once recommended the appointment of a special officer with a special allowance so that the students may not be charged extra?

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—I did not suggest. A small fee may be levied from each student. Then they will

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have the benefit of the medical man's service.

Mr. C. J. Mathew.— Without being charged extra for each visit?

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—As a matter of fact, each visit is not paid for.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—We want to know definitely whether it is per capita or per year?

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—There is nothing definite about it.

Mr. Thomas Manjuran —I wish to say just a few words. In the course of the discussion over this sorry affair, I was very glad to come upon a discovery, namely, that persons who are of the most imperturbable appearance are occasionally capable of great emotion.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—You are also no exception to it.

Mr. Thomas Manjuran.—I have often noticed that we, the younger Members of this House, have been put down to be too emotional. It is a consolation to find now that the veterans too are subject to the same trouble. I am very glad to find that the Director of Public Instruction evinced strong emotion, and I think he has every reason to do so, because from the information that he laid before this House the charge levelled against his Department seems to have been groundless, though very serious. I venture to doubt whether the Hon'ble mover of this motion might perhaps never have introduced this into this House, if he were in possession of all these facts.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—I brought it with full information.

Mr. Thomas Manjuran.—Well, let us examine this case as if it were being tried in a court of law. We must remember the facts that in a trial case the accused is before court. In this case, the accused is nowhere here. Perhaps he may be standing there mute and dumb. But we must critically and very carefully examine this case.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—Who is the accused here?

Mr. Thomas Manjuran.—The accused is he, who is alleged to have failed to provide the hostel with *chukkollam* and *kanji* water.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—My charge is against the Government.

Mr. Thomas Manjuran.—You may charge anybody. Let us consider what took place with scrupulous fairness to all parties.

Mr. K. Ayyappan.—Not as a vakil.

Mr. Thomas Manjuran.—The advantage of being a vakil is that you can often see both sides of the question. *Chukkollam* or the absence of it is one incident. There was no

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chukkollam left in the patient's room. But the moment it is proved that there was a student in the room who was not sick, where is the force of that argument? Here is a sick person in a room with a room-mate hale and hearty. If *chukkollam* were needed, he would at once have fetched it. So that, I don't think any serious attention can be given to the charge of *chukkollam*. The second and the one serious charge is that these students were sent out of the hostel without being allowed to remain there though they were sick. The College authorities are alleged to have said, 'all of you get out'. The fact seems to be just the reverse. If it is proved, as I believe it has been, that these students were allowed to remain there till Sunday, where is the bottom of that case? In this case, we have to consider relevant facts. It was decided by the College authorities to send away all the students from the hostel owing to the panic prevailing there. The bulk of the students went away. In fact, all the students except the 3 who remained there. If it is proved beyond doubt that one student remained there because he was sick, how can we seriously argue that the students were forced out of the hostel? We must consider from both points of view. There was a serious epidemic of small-pox in Ernakulam. Two students were suffering from small-pox in the hostel. The Doctor who went and examined picked out two more cases of small-pox. The students got frightened and left. So, the argument that the College authorities wanted to send out these students will not stand. Thus you find that the student in question was not asked to go away, he was allowed to remain there, like the other students who did remain there, nor was he pressed out of the hostel. There remains the question why he was allowed to go without a medical examination. This is a matter on which we must seriously consider. I would say that the Government was very wrong there. In spite of the fact that the hospital is close by, to allow a sick boy to leave without medical examination is dangerous. There are as many as 90 students in the hostel. What has happened is this. This boy, just like the other boys, must have been over-eager to go out of Ernakulam, somehow. His eagerness must have given him some nervous strength, I suppose, which prevented his feeling his weakness then. And he eagerly left Ernakulam. The question is whether there were materials enough for the Superintendent to veto his leaving. I emphatically think there were not.

I must say the Government was very wrong. The blame is not upon the Superintendent because he had no medical officer available to ascertain whether there were any small-pox

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symptoms on the boy. The Superintendent found no palpable symptoms. The two previous days that boy had no fever. If there was available a medical officer, whose duty it was to examine such boys on leaving, the tragedy would have perhaps been averted. The Government might note that.

Dr. A. R. Menon.— I am sure that we are very depressed by the facts associated with the death of this boy, and no one sympathises with the Head of the Department more than I myself do. I don't mind confessing in this Council that I am always partial to that Department because that Department, for a long number of years, under best men as Heads of Departments, has carried on its duties to the utmost and entire satisfaction of the public. Now, at the close of a long career, that such incidents should have taken place in his Department really commands the sympathy, my sympathy at any rate, not only to the Department but to the Head of the Department. It should not be construed that we have brought this motion here very lightly, because we are anxious, as anyone else, that, if no fault lies with either the Medical Department or the Education Department, that should be proclaimed publicly. An adjournment motion is the best means of proclaiming to the public that the unhappy events associated with the death are not due to the carelessness or neglect of those Departments but due to providential circumstances. But, on the other hand, if it could be found that the carelessness or want of proper judgment has contributed to the death of this boy, then it is our duty openly to point out and proclaim the fact, and it is your duty to accept the statement and express your regret for what has taken place. Now, to come to a definite conclusion, there is some difficulty. The statement read out by the Leader of the Party does not coincide with the explanation given by the Director of Public Instruction himself. I am not disposed to attach any great importance to one side or the other, for I would certainly have attached all the importance to the statement of the Director of Public Instruction, if he himself had a chance of sifting these facts and making the necessary investigations. These statements have been supplied to him by the Department or by those who are vitally concerned in this matter.

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—I made my own enquiry. The Principal was present, the Superintendent was present, the Medical subordinate was present and the Chief Medical Officer was present.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—The omission is in not having taken the statements of those who have been closely associated with the student. The students' evidence regarding Professor Ramanatha Ayyar, who is one of the popular Professors in the College,

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should be taken. If they also say against Professor Ramanatha Ayyar, I would attach very great importance only to such a statement. Unfortunately, that statement is not taken. Nor is the statement taken from the boy who is a room-mate and who should be reasonably expected to know that the boy had profuse perspiration on that day. This statement ought to have been taken. Now, even granting some of these statements, at any rate,there is an unfortunate impression produced not in the Cochin State but in Kerala, because the Cochin State perhaps knows much better how these things should be carried on, and Cochin also knows the people who are entrusted with this work. When cholera was spreading in those areas, either the Heads of the Departments or some of their subordinates had not discharged their duties not only properly but humanely. This spirit of humanity has been exhibited in this case. When you examined there is something in it. Has he or has he not examined? I don't mind what mistake he has committed. We can't help it. It is impossible sometimes to diagnose. But a non-examination is a serious charge.

Mr. Thomas Manjuran.—Was he called upon to examine? You are attacking a doctor.

Dr. A. R. Menon.—Now, as I said, there is nothing wrong in that. I will not say a word from a wrong hypothesis, if a mistake is made. I do not know what your diagnosis is. I am not concerned with that. All of us make mistakes, though some of us pretend that they are not mistakes. I also make mistakes. Much more can you, because of your better position. Did you subject him to a medical examination? There is no use of saying that the boy did not ask for examination, and we did not examine. The hostel is not a hotel. You are the local guardian. You are the people to look after them. You are to look to their convenience and everything. And as you just now said, even, sometimes, when need arises, you help them financially. Now the position of the hostel authorities is that of a local guardian to some extent. Now, it is the duty of a guardian, when a person is ill, to have him examined by a doctor. If he had done his duty, then I, for my part, cannot find any fault against the hostel authorities in the least. If it is not so, there was grave dereliction of duty in not submitting the boy to medical examination before sending him away. I would certainly have taken the word of the Warden, if he has said that money has been disbursed to the students. Now the unfortunate result of this discussion is that some of us will go from here thinking that there was something wrong, while others would think that there was nothing wrong. No definite result could be achieved by a discussion like this, for the simple reason that the material on which you could

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form a judgment is insufficient. And just as the mover who has given that statement is interested in the boy, we are also interested. Don't think I am attributing motives. Nor am I saying that the person who is interested in the boy is making all these statements without making substantial enquiries. A resolution of this nature is bound to create some damage to the institution and to the mover, if it is brought without the facts and without himself being satisfied that he would be justified in bringing forward a motion of this kind. My advice to the Government is to institute a thorough inquiry which will result in the honourable acquittal of the charges levelled against him. Till you say that such and such is possible, there will be a portion of the public who will believe in the error of judgment, sometimes even something worse on the part of the Government. Then I ask the Government to sift these facts and convince that this College which has had a good reputation in South India still retains it, and whatever may be the opinion of the newspapers in Malabar, this incident is providential and not due to the carelessness of those who are in authority. It is a duty which the Government should do by themselves and to the public and last, but by no means the least, to the interests of the College itself. Foreign students, who have heard of the incident, will fear to seek admission into this College, and so it will affect the interests of the College.

Mr. C. J. Mathew.—Sir, no doubt, we all feel very sorry over this sad and unfortunate event. But without the least hesitation I may re-echo the words of the Director and assure the House that in Professor Ramanatha Ayyar we have one of the best Superintendents. I know it personally and I know it from the wards themselves, and it would be the height of injustice to make any such charges against him. He is like a father to these boys. If the parent will allow his son to die of neglect, so will Mr. Ramanatha Ayyar. Now the question to be lookd into is whether any injudicious haste was shown in the matter of closing these hostels and whether all the students were asked to get out without regard to their state of health at the time. I made enquiries. Even in the notice announcing the closing of the hostel, provision had been made for such of the students who wished to remain to continue there on paying guest charges. So there was no forcing of the students to get out of the hostel, and sickly students did continue to live there after the hostel was formally closed. Late Mr. Sankaran Nayar, the deceased student, could have, therefore, stayed on, if only he wanted to do so. He wished to get home and the Superintendent gave him permission. That is all. Now, Sir, I am not going to say that there is absolutely no neglect in any quarter. There is neglect

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and that is with the Government in not having made some arrangements for the visiting of this hostel by a medical officer authorised and appointed for that purpose. I believe that for every hostel attached to the Christian College at Madras a special medical officer is appointed to look after the health of the students staying there. If there had been such a medical man specially appointed by the Government, to look into the state of health of the students staying in the Hindu Hostel, even without Mr. Ramanatha Ayyar's request, he would have, in duty bound, come and examined the boy. So the whole neglect is on the part of the Government in not having appointed somebody responsible to look after the health of the students staying in hostels. Is it reasonable for the Director to say that the students may depend generally upon the doctors of the General Hospital? He admits that there are no arrangements made by which a medical officer could be obtained in the hostel without being paid for. Suppose in this particular case Mr. Ramanatha Ayyar had sent for the doctor to get the boy examined, and suppose the boy had no money to pay the doctor's bill. Mr. Ramanatha Ayyar in that case would necessarily have to pay the doctor from his pocket. I am not suggesting that Mr. Ramanatha Ayyar would have hesitated at all to do so out of his own pocket. On the other hand, if he felt there was necessity to get the boy examined, he would certainly have done so. If there was some arrangement made, as proposed by the medical officer, to appoint a medical man to be in charge of all the hostels, such difficulties could have been avoided. That is what is done in the Christian College Hostel at Madras. There a medical fee is levied, about Re. 1 or so per head. Let our Government appoint a special doctor to visit and examine the wards very often.

If the boy was asked to travel in a second class compartment and was also asked to be conveyed in an easy chair at Shoranur, does it betray a guilty conscience on the part of the Superintendent? Now the charge is that the Superintendent knew that the boy was in an extremely weak state of health and still he permitted the boy to go. Hence he gave these cautions which reveal a guilty conscience. He was over-cautious like a loving parent, and that is his *sin* now. So, in my opinion, if there is any neglect on anybody, it is upon the Government, especially in view of the fact that the Chief Medical and Sanitary Officer had taken it to their notice to have a medical officer appointed for the hostel, which scheme was thrown out by the Government. Therefore, I take this opportunity to impress upon

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the Government to appoint an authorised medical Superintendent to all these hostels. This sad incident has nothing to do with neglect on the part of the Superintendent.

Mr. C. A. Kunjunni Raja.—It was not my intention to take part in this discussion, because I must confess at the outset that I am absolutely ignorant of the real facts of this case. I came to this House with an open mind about this matter, and the turn which the discussion has taken has made it very difficult to come to a correct conclusion, because we get contradictory statements about the essential and vital issues arising in the case. If the version of the Director is to be believed, here is a boy, almost recovered from fever, going home, travelling in a rickshaw early in the morning, getting into a second class compartment at Ernakulam without help, and sitting in an easy and comfortable posture in the carriage till he reaches Trichur, who develops a very bad disease after he leaves Trichur. When he reached Shoranur he was in a critical position; he was profusely perspiring. So the development must have been while he was in the railway line between Shoranur and Trichur. If so, this would have been a fit subject for an adjournment motion in the Madras Legislative Council, the railway line being British territory, and this Legislative Council has no jurisdiction to discuss this matter. This would have been a very reasonable argument for the Government, if the Director's version is true, Doctor A. G. Menon, a Member of this Council, of great reputation in the medical world, examined the boy in his declining hours, an hour after he reached Palghat at 1 p. m., and I cannot see my way to disbelieve him in this matter. He has told us that he found the boy in a very critical condition, and he did not even think it necessary that any medicine should be administered, for the boy was sinking. The Hon'ble Mr. Sankaran Unni, M. L C., met the boy at Shoranur and his letter to Dr. A. G. Menon, which was read to us, shows the boy was in a stage of complete exhaustion and the boy was dying. The boy could not even drink the coffee which was kept by his side. Mr. Sankaran Unni was not sure if the boy would reach Palghat safe, and that he might expire on the way before he reached home. He gives all the facts as he found, and I see no reason to disbelieve him; which, if believed, shows the boy must have been sinking when he reached Shoranur. We have to consider, therefore, in this case what was the condition of the boy when he left Ernakulam. It is only 3 hours' journey from Ernakulam to Shoranur. If the condition was critical at Shoranur, surely at Ernakulam it could not have been the normal as was represented to be by the Director. That creates suspicion and special pleading is evident in the version of the Director. What

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was the condition of the boy when he was about to leave Ernakulam? There is no use of saying there was *chukkollam* in the hostel somewhere. Was the boy certified to be fit for travel? Was a relation of Mr. T. K. Krishna Menon, who was enquiring after the welfare of the boy at Ernakulam, given information about the condition of the boy? Was the guardian at Palghat communicated? Was it right to have allowed this boy to travel such a long distance without proper help? It may be fair that the Head of a Department should try to support his subordinate. We have to approach the question from a different angle of vision. Here is an admittedly sick boy dying a few hours after he left the hostel. Can you honestly believe that he was in a fit condition to travel? Unless the Government is prepared to make an open enquiry into this matter, the Government has rightly to be blamed. Why should the Government be nervous to ascertain openly what the facts are. Look at the version of the outside newspapers about this incident. It is very interesting to read the version of 'the Manorama' started from Calicut

"എറണാകുളം കോളേജ് ഹോസ്റ്റൽ.

ഇന്നത്തെ പരിഷ്കൃതരീതിയിലുള്ള വിദ്യാലയങ്ങളോട് അനുബന്ധിച്ചു നടത്തിവരുന്ന ഹോസ്റ്റലുകളുടെ ഏറ്റവും വിദ്യാർത്ഥികളെ സംബന്ധിച്ചു ഏറ്റവും പ്രധാനമുള്ള ഒരു സ്ഥാപനമാണെന്നു തർക്കമറ്റ സംഗതിയാണ്. സ്വന്തം മാതാപിതാക്കന്മാരേയും ഇതരബന്ധുജനങ്ങളേയും വിട്ടുപിരിഞ്ഞു നാനാപ്രദേശങ്ങളിൽനിന്നു ഒരു വിദ്യാഭ്യാസകേന്ദ്രത്തിൽ എത്തിച്ചേരുന്ന യുവവിദ്യാർത്ഥികളുടെ അദ്ധ്യയനകാലത്തെ ശോഭനവും ശ്രേയസ്കരവുമാക്കിത്തീർത്തു അവരെ സന്മാർഗ്ഗത്തിൽ നടത്തിക്കൊണ്ടുപോകേണ്ടുന്ന ചുമതല അദ്ധ്യാപകന്മാർക്കെന്നപോലെ ഹോസ്റ്റലുകളെ ഭരിക്കുന്ന ഉദ്യോഗസ്ഥന്മാർക്കും കഴിച്ചുകൂടാത്തതാകുന്നു. ഇളംവയസ്സിൽ സ്വഗൃഹങ്ങളുടെ രമ്യപ്രദേശങ്ങളിൽനിന്നു അകന്നുപോകാൻ നിർബ്ബന്ധിതരാകുന്ന വിദ്യാർത്ഥികളെ വേണ്ടപോലെ നോക്കിരക്ഷിക്കുവാനുള്ള സന്നദ്ധത ഹോസ്റ്റൽപ്രവർത്തകന്മാർക്കുണ്ടാകുമെന്നു കരുതിയും അവരുടെ വാത്സല്യപൂർവ്വകമായ മേൽനോട്ടത്തെ പ്രതീക്ഷിച്ചുമാണ് അച്ഛനമ്മമാർ അവരുടെ കൊച്ചു സന്താനങ്ങളെ ദൂരദിക്കുകളിലുള്ള ഹോസ്റ്റലുകളിൽ എല്പിച്ചുപോരുന്നതു. അങ്ങിനെ എല്പിക്കപ്പെട്ടുന്ന വിദ്യാർത്ഥികളുടെ ആരോഗ്യവിഷയത്തിൽ ഹോസ്റ്റൽ പ്രവർത്തകന്മാർ വല്ലപ്രകാരത്തിലും അനവധാനത കാണിക്കുകയാണെങ്കിൽ അതു ഒരിക്കലും ക്ഷമിക്കാൻ പാടില്ലാത്ത ഒരു മഹാപരാധമാണെന്നു വേണം പറയുവാൻ.

എറണാകുളം കോളേജിലെ ഒരു വിദ്യാർത്ഥിയായിരുന്ന തരകത്തു ശങ്കരൻനായർ എന്ന കുട്ടിയുടെ മരണത്തെപ്പറ്റി ഞങ്ങൾ കഴിഞ്ഞ ലക്കത്തിൽ പ്രസ്താവിച്ചതു വായനക്കാർ ഓർക്കുന്നുണ്ടായിരിക്കുമല്ലൊ. ഈ യുവാവു കോളേജ് ഹോസ്റ്റലിലായിരുന്നു താമസിച്ചിരുന്നതു. ദിനം പിടിപെട്ടു മൂന്നു നാലു ദിവസത്തിനകം മരിക്കത്തക്കവണ്ണം അത്യാപത്കരമായ അവശതയിൽ ആ കുട്ടി കിടന്നിട്ടും ആവർത്തമാനം അയാളുടെ രക്ഷിതാക്കന്മാരെ അറിയിക്കണമെന്നൊരു വിചാരം ഹോസ്റ്റൽ പ്രവർത്തകന്മാർക്കുണ്ടായില്ലെന്നാണ് ഞങ്ങൾ അറിയുന്നതു. മരിക്കുന്നതിനു തലേദിവസം രോഗി ഹോസ്റ്റലിൽ നിന്നു പുറത്തേക്കു പൊയ്ക്കൊള്ളണമെന്നു നിർബ്ബന്ധിക്കുകയും അധികൃതന്മാർ ചെയ്തുവത്രെ! സ്റ്റേ

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ഹിതനായ വേറൊരു വിദ്യാർത്ഥിയുടെ സമയോജിതമായ സഹായം ഭാഗ്യവശാൽ ഉണ്ടായതുകൊണ്ടാണു" മിസ്റ്റർ ശങ്കരൻനായർക്കു സഭാഹൃദത്തിൽ എത്തിയുടനന്തരം ആളുകളുടെ അന്ത്യോപചാരങ്ങൾ അനുഭവിച്ചു ഇഹലോകവാസം വെടിയുവാനുള്ള യോഗമെങ്കിലും ലഭിച്ചതു". അല്ലായിരുന്നുവെങ്കിൽ, മാന്യതയും ബഹുജനസമ്മതിയും സിദ്ധിച്ച ഒരു സൽകുടുംബത്തിലെ അരുമസന്താനമായ ആ യുവാവു് സുപ്രസിദ്ധയായ ഒരു വിദുഷീരത്നത്തിന്റെ വാത്സല്യഭാജനം—യശോധനനായ ഒരു സമുദായനേതാവിന്റെ വംശപരമ്പരയേയും അതിന്റെ ഉൽകൃഷ്ടതയേയും നിലനിത്തിപ്പോരുവാൻ പോരുന്നവനായിത്തീരേണ്ടുന്ന ഒരു സുചരിതൻ—സഭാഹൃദത്തിൽനിന്നും സ്വജനങ്ങളിൽനിന്നും അകലെ ഏതോ ഒരു ഓരിക്കിൽ കിടന്നു അന്ത്യശ്വാസം വലിച്ചു നാട്ടുകാർക്കും വീട്ടുകാർക്കും ഒരിക്കലും തീരാത്ത മനോവേദനയ്ക്കിടയാക്കി ആരും ഒരു നാഥനില്ലാത്തവിധത്തിൽ ലോകരംഗത്തിൽനിന്നു നിരോധനം ചെയ്യുമായിരുന്നു! തറവാടിന്റെ സുകൃതം കൊണ്ടോ ആ പുണ്യാത്മാവിന്റെ ഗുരുത്വം കൊണ്ടോ ഒരു സ്നേഹിതന്റെ ഔദാര്യം ഇവയൊരു ഉപവസ്ഥയിൽനിന്നു മിസ്റ്റർ ശങ്കരൻനായരെ രക്ഷപ്പെടുത്തി എങ്കിലും രോഗത്തിന്റെ ആരംഭദശയിൽ വേണ്ടപ്പെട്ട യാതൊരു സഹായവും ഹോസ്റ്റൽ അധികൃതന്മാരിൽനിന്നു ലഭിക്കായ്കയാലാണ്" രോഗം അത്ര പെട്ടെന്നു പിടിച്ചാൽ കിട്ടാത്തവിധത്തിൽ വഷളിച്ചതെന്നും, ആ ഉപടസ്ഥിതിയിൽ രോഗിയെ എറണാകുളം മുതൽ ഒലവക്കോട്ടവരെ, തീവണ്ടിയാത്രക്കു അനുവദിച്ചതുകൊണ്ടാണു" മരണം അത്ര പൊടുന്നനെ നേരിട്ടതെന്നും ഞങ്ങൾ അനേഷണത്തിൽ അറിയുന്നതു ശരിയാണെങ്കിൽ ഈ വിഷയത്തെപ്പറ്റി ഹോസ്റ്റൽ അധികൃതന്മാരിൽ നിന്നു തക്കതായ ഒരു സമാധാനം പ്രതീക്ഷിക്കുവാൻ ജനങ്ങൾക്കു അവകാശമുണ്ടല്ലൊ. ഒന്നാമതു രോഗസ്ഥിതി വിദ്യാർത്ഥിയുടെ രക്ഷിതാക്കന്മാരെ അറിയിക്കാതിരുന്ന തെറ്റു"; രണ്ടാമതു രോഗത്തിനു തക്കതായ ചികിത്സ ചെയ്യിക്കാതിരുന്ന തെറ്റു"; മൂന്നാമതു രോഗിയുടെ അവശതസ്ഥിതി കണ്ടുകൊണ്ടു ഹോസ്റ്റലിൽ നിന്നു പുറത്തു പോകാൻ നിർബ്ബന്ധിച്ച തെറ്റു"; നാലാമതു രോഗിയെ ആ പരവശാവസ്ഥയിൽ റെയിൽവെയാത്ര ചെയ്യാൻ അനുവദിച്ച തെറ്റു"; ഈ തെറ്റുകൾക്കെല്ലാം തക്കതായ സമാധാനം, അതിനുത്തരവാദികളായവരിൽനിന്നു ലഭിക്കുന്നതുവരെ ജനങ്ങൾ തൃപ്തിപ്പെടുകയില്ല. കോളേജധികൃതന്മാരുടെയും കൊച്ചി വിദ്യാഭ്യാസഡയറക്ടരുടെയും ത്വരിതതരമായ ശ്രദ്ധ ഇതിൽ പതിഞ്ഞു കാണുമെന്നു ഞങ്ങൾ വിശ്വസിക്കുന്നു.

(മനോരമ)."

My request to the Government is to institute an open enquiry and do the needful in the matter.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—Sir, I rise to support the proposition for a proper enquiry into the matter. You would please understand that I am also an alumnus of the College, and the reputation of it is as dear to me as it is to the Director. And I would also bring to notice one or two facts here which have escaped the attention of the erudite criminal lawyer that stood up before me. There are some facts here which cannot be glossed over. That is to say, the boy was suffering from fever from Wednesday. He was examined only on Friday.

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—He was examined on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—Thank you, Sir. And he was found

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at that time not fit to travel and, therefore, was asked not to travel. The Director said that the boy was anxious to go away even on Thursday, and he was advised not to go. Who advised him ?

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—The Superintendent of the hostel.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—I don't mind who it is. There is the fact that he was examined on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. There is also the fact that the doctor did not examine him on Saturday. There is also the statement that he wanted to go out of Ernakulam, perhaps fearing that there is a prevalence of small-pox or whatever it be. Perhaps the boy wanted to go away because (there is the story that) he was not given *chukkuvellam*. I don't want to enter into those things; but let me go into the main facts. There may be other reasons. That is, the boy was advised on Friday not to go. On Saturday the hostel was closed.

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—Is that stated so?

Mr. Thomas Manjuran.—When was the hostel closed ?

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—It was closed on Saturday. Ample provision was made for those who remained there, and as the Member for Trippunittura said, there was a sick student there.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—I ask when that boy, who was unfit to travel on Friday, wanted to go away, was it not proper to examine him on Friday ? On Friday he was examined, and he was found in an unfit condition to travel.

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—No one says that on Friday he was in an unfit condition.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—Then your statements cannot be believed. I heard distinctly from you that the boy was examined on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. So, if a wrong diagnosis is made, nobody can find fault with it. There is no question of diagnosis. What I am saying is that the doctor comes there, sees the boy and goes away.

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—The examination was to see whether there was any symptom of small-pox.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—Your mind was always ingrained with small-pox. The doctor who went to the Hostel went to him only to see whether the boy was suffering from fever.

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—He had no fever on Friday.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—You say that nobody examined and yet that there was no fever.

Mr. Thomas Manjuran.—The mover himself admits that there was no fever on Friday.

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Mr. A. B. Salem.—A new discovery I have made. The new discovery is that you say that you are impartial. You want to say that you are not partial at all when you are really partial. I only want to point out that and nothing else. Therefore, I urge—we get all kinds of statements—that there must be some sifting of all these statements for the reputation of the College and the authorities. If they are innocent, they should welcome the enquiry and stand the enquiry. Here is a respectable boy, a well-to-do boy, going back to his house only to die. Is it not a serious matter for enquiry? Let an enquiry be started at once, and everybody be washed. Then we are satisfied, you can be satisfied, the reputation of the College is satisfied and the public is satisfied. Here is a boy who, after 3 hours of leaving Ernakulam, is found full of perspiration. There are statements that he was suffering from perspiration. There was a student who was there, and he also upheld the statement that the boy could not get anything he wanted, and that boy had to sit up with that student the whole night. That student had the kindness to sit up with that boy the whole of that night and cater to his needs when the servants were available downstairs! So I am not satisfied with a desultory discussion to sift this matter. Perhaps the Warden may not even know. The Superintendent may not even know. They might have given the best of orders to the servants to wait at the very door of this very room. Here is a fact, which we all repeat, that the boy, soon after a few hours of leaving Ernakulam, passed away. Unless somebody were to say that it is heart failure, we can't be satisfied. If that is so, nobody is to be blamed. Why is not a doctor sent for when the hospital is so near? Are there not any number of medical men there? Would they refuse to go to the hostel? If the Warden had sent for a medical man, they would have freely gone there. The medical men are not at fault. I don't blame you, (*pointing to Dr. Verghese*) Sir, at all. You yourself went there. If anybody had been brought, you would have examined him. Therefore, what I submit is, here is a fit case for an enquiry, and I would press upon the Government that they should appoint either a mixed committee of officials and non-officials or whomsoever they like—a judicial officer. They may appoint the Hon'ble Member for Trippunittura himself as a judicial officer and give him the duty of sifting of the matter. My Honourable friend the Member of Trippunittura got up for sifting the matter and ended it with a compliment to Mr. Ramanatha Ayyar I attach no blame to anybody; but I will attach in the end as to who is in fault. Here is an Hon'ble Member of the House getting up and accusing. Here is the Hon'ble Member for Trippunittura saying that there is absolutely nothing. When fairness

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demands to do our duty, we must be fair to our friends, and sometimes in the discharge of our duty, we cannot look to the face of our friends.

Mr. Thomas Manjuran.—Then why do you suspect that the Director has not been fair in his investigations?

Mr. A. B. Salem.—I will tell you. He is the Head of the Department concerned. Naturally there will be a bias to uphold the story for the sake of the dignity of his Department. I should think so. If I were in his position, I would uphold.

Mr. Thomas Manjuran.—That is why you are not there.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—Then you are a very good master! If you do not support your subordinates, nobody will stand for you. You can be the Member for Trippunittura alone. Therefore, when we are to enquire into the matter, we must have somebody who are unconnected with this matter. The best unbiased persons must be selected and given all the materials for enquiry. The Director of Public Instruction should give them all his evidence which he has collected, and the committee should go through all this and form a judgment. Here are statements made, and as the Hon'ble Member for Trippunittura has said, there must be two impressions, one going to whitewash and the other to blackwash. Let us have the fair wash. Therefore, it is a very important matter that affected the life and death of a boy and which affects the fair name of our College and hostel and the fair name of Mr. Ramanatha Ayyar, whom I know as a very sympathetic gentleman and as sympathetic as a parent. Therefore, if there is neglect, either wilful or otherwise, by oversight, the matter may be found out. What is the objection to that course that the Director of Public Instruction can possibly urge I cannot understand.

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—I have given an assurance that I will give it my best attention. A thorough and an exhaustive enquiry will be made.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—And before completing that enquiry, you gave a judgment.

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—What did you do, Sir? If you enquire with this frame of mind, what result will follow?

Mr. A. B. Salem.—I am quite satisfied, if you give the assurance that you would make the fairest enquiry as far as it lies in your power. After that, you should leave that result to be sifted by somebody. Because I find here that you cannot go to that Poduval and others, who are the best persons to speak on it and take their evidence.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—In the face of that assurance, I don't press for any division of the House. We want to bring to the

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notice of the public all facts. Of course, they slighted on the words *chukkollam* and *kanji* and everything. I can openly say from this House that it was my nephew, a boarder of room No. 12 or 11, who administered cold water, both for this boy and a Nambidi boy. Nobody can say it was not true. It is because that *chukkollam* affair is slighted.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—I will ask the Government to enquire into the matter.

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—I will make a full enquiry and submit the result to the Government. My enquiry is not yet complete.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—Is that all?

Dr. A. R. Menon.—Will you make a fair enquiry so far as your Department is concerned?

Mr. A. B. Salem.—I understood you to say that you will make your own enquiry and satisfy yourself in the matter and then you will address the Government. For what purpose? To say that I have made such and such enquiry, and here is the result of the enquiry to be looked into. What I will urge is that you should ask the Government to appoint somebody to make further enquiry. We want a public enquiry. We have got definite statement from the student who was with the boy who died, and it has been let out that it was Dr. A. G. Menon's nephew who was there in the hostel. I can tell you there is another relative of another Honourable friend who is also inside the House whose relative was also in the same hostel. So that we are here with the statements of those who were actually with the boy. And the Director of Public Instruction has got only information from the Superintendent and the medical officer. And he said that all the students had gone away, and, therefore, he could not take their statements. That is his statement. From all these, he finds no neglect or carelessness and so nothing on the part of any one. That was the conclusion that the Hon'ble Member drew. I am not satisfied with his conclusions. But there are others, nearer the boy, whose statements are yet to come before the Director of Public Instruction; but whose statements we are in possession of. Therefore, let us not gauge it yet. Here is a public matter. Let it be publicly enquired into. Public matter of a death of a College boy? Is that not a public matter? He was sent off from the College simply to die. Suppose your son is left like that. You would have sent him to the hospital for further observation. We are trying to press the Government. Therefore, I say, if the Director of Public Instruction is not prepared to address the Government after his enquiries to make a public enquiry, to satisfy not only

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us but the people and the public around our institution, I will ask my Honourable friend to press the motion to a division.

Mr. V. V. Anantapadmanabha Ayyar.—May I know, on a point of information, Sir, how the boy was taken to the Railway Station, whether he was taken in a rickshaw or in any other vehicle?

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—He was taken in a rickshaw.

Mr. V. V. Anantapadmanabha Ayyar.—There is another point also. You have stated that there were 20 students residing in the hostel who were suffering from fever. Were there any complaints with respect to the other students for want, neglect, or any other matter? Were any of the other students taken to the hospital?

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—Some 2 or 3 were taken to the hospital because they were thought to be serious.

Mr. V. V. Anantapadmanabha Ayyar.—During the course of discussion the question before the House seems to have taken a different shape, *viz.*, to have a public enquiry in respect of this matter. The public enquiry is sought for in order to allay the mind of the public and to see whether anybody is to blame as to what has happened. Some enquiry appears to have been already made. The Director of Public Instruction has made an enquiry in this matter. I think that some questions were sent regarding this matter by the Hon'ble Member for Chittur to this Council.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—But unfortunately those questions have not been answered, Sir.

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Matthai.—There is a certain amount of delay. They had to be sent to the subordinate officers, and when we got replies from them, it was late.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—I sent them on the 1st of April and to-day it is the 29th.

Mr. V. V. Anantapadmanabha Ayyar.—Some questions were sent by the Member for Chittur, and I understand that registered notices were also received by the Director of Public Instruction from the guardian of the boy. I understand that an enquiry has been started by the Director of Public Instruction and, as far as the materials collected by him show, that he has exercised the utmost care and diligence to trace whether anyone is to be blamed. That is the position. Now so far no decision has been arrived at. But he is thoroughly satisfied that the charge laid against the Superintendent is entirely unsustainable. The Hon'ble Member for Chittur, when he pressed the adjournment motion, has brought to our notice certain points which all relate to the condition of the boy after the boy went to

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Shoranur. A fellow student saw him at the Trichur Railway Station. He must have visited the boy at about 1 o'clock. The physical condition of the boy before he left Ernakulam is the most important thing which has to be taken into consideration. Whether the physical condition was such that the Superintendent should not have allowed him to travel. For that purpose, he is an elderly boy and pretty grown up to say that he was not in a position to travel. He might have said that he can't travel, and the hostel Warden would not have allowed him to go on that day. The boy was in a fit condition to go as far as the Railway Station without any assistance, and then he got into the train alone, and he was sitting in his compartment as far as Trichur. So, before he left Ernakulam, he must have been in a fit condition. A sudden change in the physical condition is quite possible, and so we cannot infer that, when he started from Ernakulam, he was in a very bad state of health. Because he was taken over the bridge in an easy chair, it does not follow that he was very bad when he started from Ernakulam. Therefore, my submission is that, so far as the conduct of the Superintendent is concerned, there is nothing to be said against him.

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—Sir, it is incumbent on me to rise to explain to this House the slender connection which the Medical Department has had to do with the subject on hand. For I know that some Members very often have a tendency to hitch everything under the Sun to the Cochin Medical Department. Whether it be the prevalence of a cyclical epidemic of small pox or the casual death of a College student, the Medical Department, it would appear, has to bear a share of the blame, for, in the opening speech of the Hon'ble Member, he said: "whether the sin is to be laid at the door of the Education Department or the Medical Department". So, it is necessary for me to explain to this House what the facts of the case are, so far as our relation with the matter is concerned. I say because a statement was made that the Chief Medical Officer did not examine him, though he visited the hostel on the evening of the 14th. Two boys who were removed from the hostel to the General Hospital were found to be suffering from small-pox. And as soon as I knew it, I sent for the vaccinator to proceed to vaccination among the College students. Then, I heard he met with opposition from both the students and teachers, saying that it was examination time and that it was highly inconvenient for them to submit to vaccination. I went there with a view to seeing the authorities of the College and to inform them that it was rather an unwise step. I went there on the 14th evening. That is on Friday evening at about 4. As soon as I saw the Superintendent Mr. Ramanatha Ayyar,

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he told me that there was no one sick there, and all the students had left. I was not made aware of the existence of the boy there. The statement is that there were none there who were sick.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—My point was that the Superintendent did not bring that fact to your notice.

Diwan Bahadur Dr. V. Verghese.—Perhaps the Superintendent did not know that the boy was sick at that time. He told me that there were no sick persons in the hostel. It was due to the fact that, one or two students being found to be suffering from small-pox, it caused a panic among the students and they were anxious to go, and they went. I also understood that the students all went away. And the closing of the hostel was under the circumstances justified, because the other students may not also be affected. This boy was not brought to me for inspection, and I didn't see this boy because there was no necessity. I further shall make clear the relationship of my Department with the boy's illness.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—After 5-30 the discussion automatically comes to a close.

The House rose for the day, it being 5-30 p. m.

T. K. KRISHNA MENON,
Secretary to the Council.

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